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COEXISTENCE AND AFRICA

An upheaval is taking place in Africa. Any comparison with prior historical precedents often is invalid. The Africans have thrown away all timetables. Regardless of whether it is politically practical or economically feasible, they intend to establish their national states in the shortest possible time. The alignment of the human resources of the Africa of a decade from now will bear little resemblance to the continent today.

Who will play the leading role in assisting the Africans to shape their destiny? There are, of course, tremendous interests by Western powers on the continent. New influences have moved into Africa in recent years, and with the advent of each new nation there is a rush by the Communist bloc to extend assistance.

At the end of World War II there were four independent countries in Africa: Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia and the Union of

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South Africa. Between the first of January 1952 and the end of 1959 six new nations were born on the continent of Africa: Libya in 1952; in 1956 the Sudan, Morocco and Tunisia; in 1957 Ghana; and in 1958 Guinea. If this pace was rapid, look at 1960: Cameroon became an independent state on 1 January; Togo on April 27; the Congo leaves Belgium on 30 June; the next day Somalia will achieve independence; and Nigeria on the first of October. Mali and Madagascar as the Malagasy Republic are to become sovereign this summer, probably in June, and most, if not all, of the remaining nine now autonomous states of the French-African community will probably follow suit before the end of this year. Of these, the four in Equatorial Africa-- Gabon, Congo, the Central African Republic and Chad--are expected to emerge as a confederated unit. In West Africa, the Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Niger and Dahomey--already grouped in a loose association--may do likewise. While retaining close contractual

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ties with France, all these new sovereignties will expect to become separate members of the UN. The Asian-African bloc in that body-- already the most numerous regional bloc--will thus be enormously enlarged. In terms of Africa, it means that more than two-thirds of the continent's estimated 230 million people will be independent in 19 or more states by the end of 1960.

For most of the remaining dependent areas an early break from past ties is also clearly indicated, for the spirit now sweeping Africa cannot be slowed by arguments for delay based on being better equipped for self-government at a later date. Leaders of British Somaliland are already pressing to merge their territory with Somalia when it becomes independent. Ruanda-Urundi, a UN trust territory between the Belgian Congo and Tanganyika--probably best remembered in this country from the picture "King Solomon's

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Mines", which showed striking shots of the tall Watusi tribesmen--
may receive an independent status in 1961. In 1958 Uganda had its first
direct elections to the Legislative Council, and in 1960 Tanganyika
will have internal self-government.

Except for the coastal areas, the recorded knowledge of
Africa is shallow in time. We should recall that the history of
Africa is one closely related to Western Europe. From the days
of the Dutch in the Cape Colony until the middle of the twentieth
century it has been the British, French, Germans, Belgians,
Portuguese, Italians, Danes and Spanish that carried the Western
ways to Africa. American missionaries of the major Christian
faiths have ministered to the Africans for generations, carrying
the faith, education and medicine. There is an important American
heritage in Liberia, and since World War II particularly U. S.
investments have gone into other parts of the continent.

As the pace toward independence in Africa accelerates, the influences brought to bear upon the Africans increase proportionately.

The radio waves that are beating on the eardrums of the Africans are a good example. Twenty-four systems broadcast 600 hours of programs in more than 20 languages. Radio Cairo broadcasts in 25 languages and dialects to all parts of the continent. The Voice of Israel has programs in French, English, Swahili and Amharic. The Voice of America beams programs in English and French which reach the continent, and is planning expansion of its efforts.

Radiodifussion Francaise broadcasts from France and Brazzaville in French, English, Portuguese and Spanish, while Rome speaks in Italian, English and Somali. All-India Radio, Delhi, has programs in English, Konkani and Swahili, plus Hindi and Gujerati for the Indians who have migrated to Africa. British regional programs, in addition to their programs in English, also

broadcast in Lerganda, Chinyanja, Zulu, Hausa, Swahili, Hindi and Urdu. Radio Moscow broadcasts in English, French and Swahili. Radio Peiping broadcasts in Cantonese and English to East and Central Africa. Radio Prague has programs in French and Portuguese for Africa. Since Moscow began programs to tropical Africa in 1958, bloc propaganda has swelled to more than 60 hours a week.

Visitors from the Communist bloc bearing gifts or displaying wares are swarming throughout Africa. Though far too numerous to enumerate, a glance at the types of missions is illustrative of intent, and occasional subtlety: Ethiopia has received visits from a Chinese Communist cultural delegation, and some acrobats. Students from the Soviet Union, Hungary, Rumania and Czechoslovakia have visited Tunisia, as has an acrobatic troupe from China. Chinese Communist labor leaders have been to Morocco.

Soviet technicians have arrived to work in Ethiopia and Guinea, and others have been exploring possibilities in Ghana and the Sudan. It is also reported that some Chinese rice farmers have arrived in Guinea.

And the travel has also gone in the other direction. The Moscow Youth Festival of 1957 had some 450 to 500 Africans present, as did the Vienna Youth Festival of 1959. A trade delegation from Morocco was feted in Czechoslovakia, the U.S.S.R. and China. The Liberian Secretary of Commerce and Agriculture was invited to the Moscow Agricultural Fair.

Subjected to the greatest attention are the students--recognized as inevitable leaders in countries where advanced education is indeed a scarce commodity. Again a detailed listing is impractical, but in the Soviet Union alone, for example, there are at least 33 students from Guinea--perhaps many more, 40 from the Sudan, and 175 from the United Arab Republic. These are not impressive

figures, but when you calculate that in some of these foundling nations the university graduates are but a handful, the numbers achieve significance. At the time Guinea became independent in 1958 there were eight native university graduates in the country. Northern Nigeria has about 50 who have had the equivalent of a high school education.

In order not to give an unbalanced picture, there are 1700 African students in the United States; 10,000 in England; over 10,000 in France.

Perhaps the best illustration of the Communist effort in Africa is the performance in Guinea. Bulgaria established the first foreign embassy in Conakry. Czechoslovakia promptly provided 8,000 rifles and other arms for the security forces. East Germany is building a printing establishment. The buses in Conakry are from Hungary. The Soviet Union has provided \$35,000,000 credits with a low interest rate to finance a technological college, a radio transmitter, improvements at the Conakry

airport, a new highway from Conakry to the airport, a stadium, and a national assembly and other government buildings. East Germany accepted bananas and palm oil in barter exchange for cement, flour and consumer goods. Not to be overlooked are the technicians and experts provided; Communist bloc officials have taken over the management of the port and airport.

Herein are illustrated all of the techniques of the potential Communist penetration of Africa--that is all of the techniques save one, the hidden one. The Communists are obviously trying to make Guinea a showplace to demonstrate the advantages of cooperating with the bloc.

From the Guinean viewpoint this is a good deal. Military equipment has been given outright or supplied at bargain prices. Extensive credits have been provided for long terms at low rates for developmental purposes. Commodities which are generally in oversupply or of poor quality have been accepted in exchange for

The U.S.S.R. has been careful to cater to the sensibilities of the underdeveloped countries, making offers which preserve the sense of dignity and independence. It has recognized the psychological advantage of extending credits, and it has not insisted on detailed justification for developmental projects. The selection of the projects is worth noting: a stadium--a showpiece, a forum for presenting national accomplishments, and a vehicle for rallying public support; a radio transmitter and a printing establishment, vital necessities in the field of public media; and the road from the airport to Conakry--to be seen by every foreign visitor.

Guinea now has four trade agreements with Communist bloc countries, and this may be further expanded. There are rumors that the Soviet Union has offered to build a hydroelectric project in return for a mineral concession over the entire country. Ghana too is pushing a tremendous hydroelectric project on the Volta River and needs help. Both Accra and Conakry are interested in help on

these projects from the West, but if this is not forthcoming they may well take it from the Communist bloc.

But what about the hidden technique? Here I would stress that the overt activities of the Communist bloc are all most proper. It is true that recognition is prompt; that national leaders are feted; that the experts and technicians stick to their task. But beneath the surface anti-Western prejudices are encouraged, Communist party cadres are built up covertly, youth and labor leaders are indoctrinated in the U. S. S. R. while so-called "democratic fronts" apply pressure. All of these are activities which can be officially denied.

We see the technique being applied in Guinea. What about the rest of Africa? Here are a few illustrations. The powerful Sudan Railway Workers Union, now officially outlawed, is controlled by the Communists, who took over using their usual techniques. There are 55 in the Soviet

Embassy in Khartoum, three in the Sudanese in Moscow. There are 13 in the Chinese Embassy in Khartoum--at least that was the number they reached when the new Chinese Ambassador and I found ourselves seatmates on the flight from Cairo to Khartoum last summer. There are no Sudanese in Peiping. As you undoubtedly know, in recent years the Sudanese have had difficulty in disposing of their fine long staple cotton. In 1957 the Soviet Union was reported to have offered to take all of the Sudanese surplus in exchange for arms. The Sudanese declined.

In Ethiopia in recent months there has been a large influx of technicians and advisors from the U.S.S.R. You will recall that last summer the Soviet Union made a sizeable credit to Ethiopia at the time of Emperor Haile Selassie's visit to Moscow. There is now a Soviet technical assistance mission in Addis Ababa, and more technicians will arrive to implement the credit.

The Communist-front World Federation of Trade Unions is influential in Africa. The CGT has a special school run by Communists for African labor leaders.

Before we draw any conclusions, or make any general comparisons, let us look first at the needs of Africa.

First, we should recognize that at the moment knowledge about Africa is rather imprecise. The United Nations has established an Economic Commission for Africa with headquarters in Addis Ababa which expects to take five years to determine the problems of food production, the domestic resources for capital, and the methods for adequate financing of development--just to name some of the major aspects. Indicative of the lack of knowledge is the common concept of a continent with lush vegetation and great rainfall. The facts are that in many parts of Africa there is inadequate rainfall and food crops are hard to raise.

Politically, most Africans are so violently anti-colonial that this can be turned into an anti-Western attitude with little effort. They will accept aid from one and any, just so in their eyes there are no strings attached, no apparent efforts of control and nothing which would indicate domination.

In government there are desperate needs for experts in all fields of public administration. This extends into every field of government and is particularly acute in education, public health and police administration.

The Africans intend to build their countries in their own ways, and these may not be the ways of the West--or of the East. In fact, we should realize that the ways of the East may prove more congenial, especially when the Chinese are not only stressing their racial affinity but also their own efforts at rapid industrialization.

There undoubtedly will be an initial period of authoritarian or one-party rule in many of the new nations. As one representative of

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Ghana said, "We have to consolidate our force now. We can afford to be liberal later." In Guinea it has been stated, "The Government and the Assembly don't mean a thing; they are only there to carry out the Party's wishes." In the Sudan fear of a civil war toppled the democratic system the British left and created a military dictatorship.

In some areas there will be a return to tribal wars and fractionalization. Very few of the African states correspond with any ethnic or cultural units. There are some 700 to 1,000 languages and dialects on the continent--276 Bantu dialects alone. Radio Ghana, to reach a population less than five million, broadcasts in six African languages.

Economically, the needs of Africa cannot be described much more optimistically. On the one hand this is a continent with almost incalculable natural and mineral wealth. It has been said

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that if all of the bauxite on the continent were mined and processed,

aluminum would flow from every faucet in the world. There are

tremendous resources in diamonds, gold iron ore and timber.

There is uranium, lead, zinc, copper, chrome, oil, cobalt,

manganese, tin and columbite. One hydroelectric project on the

Congo--the proposed Inga Project--could annually produce an

equivalent of one-fifth of all the electricity now generated in the

United States--not to say anything about the Kariba Dam on the

Zambesi in Rhodesia, the Volta River Dam project in Ghana, the

Aswan Dam in Egypt, and the Edea Dam on the Sanaga in Cameroon, and

the Soapiti on the Konkono River in Guinea.

Despite this potential wealth, excluding the Union of South

Africa, economic self-sufficiency is virtually unknown in Africa.

There is immediate need for facilities for food processing, cement

and textiles, for schools and medical facilities--to name just a few

of the more urgent necessities.

In order to acquire what is needed there is the corollary necessity for guarantees on investments, for law and order. Guinean law has made it essential for all business to have Guinean nationality. In Leopoldville, the Congolese are worried at the flow of money out of the country as a result of recent disturbances and questions concerning the future.

Certainly affecting the attitude of the African are the events in the Union of South Africa and the fighting in Algeria. Although telegraph lines and radios may not be as numerous as elsewhere in the world, the system of native communication is startlingly rapid. There are disquieting reports of plans for the formation of an African Legion.

While it is true that all of the development and modernization of Africa has been accomplished by the Western democracies, we should not necessarily expect this be accepted or appreciated by

the Africans. In fact, the Communist powers have an advantage because they were never active during the colonization of Africa.

The fact that Communist colonization takes a different form and may just be starting is not recognized by the Africans.

There is no question that the Communists plan a permanently expanded relationship with the underdeveloped countries of Africa through aid and trade. Although the Communists state that coexistence does not mean interference in the internal affairs of other nations, the Communist practice does not bear this out. The fact that a nation like the Soviet Union which is short of capital domestically will engage in an extensive aid program means only that they expect profits--not in cash as much as the minds of men.

Africa is undoubtedly an area--if not the essential area in the Free World--that has been chosen as a battlefield by the Communist

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bloc. They jump in promptly as each new country becomes independent.

We should be under no delusions about their capabilities or intent.

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